Dear Chamber members,

2020 was an extraordinary year of unforeseen challenges impacting all of us, and a year of tragic loss for many families with whom we grieve.

At the writing of this letter, it was a year ago that the World Health Organization declared a pandemic and life as we knew it began to rapidly change. Strong and resilient, eastern Connecticut responded to these unwelcome changes with cooperation, generosity, and innovation.

Our annual report tells the story of a year like no other. The report also demonstrates the Chamber's commitment to our mission and our ability to fulfill our role in serving the community even in times of incredible disruption.

As 2020 commenced, we celebrated the expanding foundation of our region's diverse business community and the substantial growth of industry across sectors. In 2020, these organizations created stability in the region's economy and offered steady support to small businesses and the community through their role as Regional Benefactors for the Chamber. The Chamber and its members are deeply grateful for their investment in the programs, outreach, events, and resources that benefit businesses and nonprofits of all sizes. We truly could not have made progress this year without our long-standing Regional Benefactors and the new ones we welcomed this year.

We are especially proud of our Chamber members on the frontlines of the pandemic, helping the community and, in fact, the world, meet these challenges. Pfizer, with partner BioNTech, developed the first approved and most highly effective vaccine in the fight against COVID-19. Yale New Haven Health/L+M Hospital and Hartford HealthCare/Backus Hospital treated the ill and maintained the health of our communities. Genesys Diagnostics joined in the fight by processing thousands of tests. Our community banks responded to a massive influx of loan applications for the Paycheck Protection Program, coming to the aid of small businesses across the region. Utilities and communication companies made it possible for us to keep working and learning remotely, and The Day and The Bulletin kept us informed.

With the support of members and benefactors, the Chamber responded to the crisis by providing information and resources in a fast-evolving environment. Our staff shifted events to new topics and formats that addressed immediate needs and constraints. The Chamber connected members to news, services, and suppliers they needed, and we reached out directly to learn how we could help more.

Filling our role to convene and connect the region, the Chamber facilitated meetings with government officials on the local, state, and federal levels, the Connecticut Airport Authority, the CT Metro Chambers and the governor’s Reopen Connecticut Small Business Implementation Task Force - all with the goal of promoting and supporting eastern Connecticut interests.

The Chamber's newly minted partnership with the Eastern Regional Tourism District preceded the coronavirus response by a few weeks. With deep roots in tourism through our extensive membership in the sector, the Chamber worked hard to support this hard-hit industry. Strong management of the financial resources provided by the state and thoughtful marketing plans will help the tourism industry recover quickly as travel resumes.

The pandemic caused unmeasurable suffering, economic devastation, and uncertainty to so many of our member businesses and families. Our efforts would not be possible without the dedicated support of our board members, trustees, and wonderful dedicated staff. We have also gained a deeper appreciation of our region’s ability to unite and rebound from adversity.

We are immensely proud of the support, the innovation, the generosity, and the perseverance demonstrated by our members, friends and colleagues in eastern Connecticut, and we look forward to playing a central role in our region's recovery and our future.

Tony Sheridan, President and CEO
Stephen Coan, Ph.D., Board Chair

Tony Sheridan, President and CEO
Stephen Coan, Ph.D., Board Chair

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2020 began steeped in optimism. Chamber President and CEO Tony Sheridan kicked off the New Year with a letter entitled “Entering the New Decade with Momentum.” New contracts at General Dynamics Electric Boat, growing opportunities in bioscience innovation with Pfizer leading the way, and the promise of investment in offshore wind energy indicated broad based economic growth with ripple effects throughout the economy. Our strong tourism industry was looking forward to increased marketing and investment on the state level. The strength of our community and a diverse economy proved invaluable as the country, and the world, came to a stop in March.

At the end of 2019, the Chamber adopted a new strategic plan focused on Collaboration, Inclusion, Innovation, Support, and Sustainability. Drawn from the values that have governed the Chamber over its 110 years, these guiding principles laid the foundation of our response to a year we could not have anticipated. Working consistently toward the positive impact we could make, the Chamber staff faced a challenging year with hope.

2020 closed with a renewed sense of hope. Vaccinations began in December thanks to Pfizer. General Dynamics Electric Boat secured additional contracts, promising growth and high-quality jobs for our region. Offshore wind projects begin with the redevelopment of State Pier in 2021-22. Tourism and hospitality foresee a promising season as newly vaccinated travelers embrace the opportunity to enjoy gathering together again.

As the impacts of COVID-19 unfolded in March, President and CEO Tony Sheridan’s leadership at the Chamber focused on our region’s history of coming together. Reminding us that our community had rallied to support each other after 9/11, to fight threats of a base closure, to take care of our military families during furlough, and through the Great Recession. Generosity, resilience, and community spirit shone through in eastern Connecticut throughout 2020. The Chamber Board of Directors, Foundation and staff embraced hope and endeavored in every way to support this caring community.
NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Megan Gilbert accepted the position of Vice President in March. Her in-depth knowledge, gained through eight years with the Chamber, has been invaluable in the transition. Courtney Assad was named Director of Administrative Partnerships, encompassing the new administrative role with the Eastern Regional Tourism District and existing relationships with other partners. Stacy Herr joined the Chamber in October as the new Program and Event Manager, bringing extensive event planning experience with 18 years in the industry.

TREASURER
Charles Bunnell
The Mohegan Tribe

LEGAL COUNSEL
Eileen Duggan
Statman Shapris Attorneys-at-Law

PAST CHAIR
Jane Davis
Lori Thompson

NORTHWESTERN CT CULTURAL COALITION
Rodney Butler
Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation

PAST CHAIR
Michael Rauh
Chelsea Groton Bank

STAFF
Chelsea Groton Bank

STAFF
Chelsea Groton Bank

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

John Antonio
Antonio Auto Group

John Blair Decker
General Dynamics Electric Boat

Eileen Duggan
Statman Shapris Attorneys-at-Law

Elyse Maloney
General Dynamics Electric Boat

Michael Rauh
United Community & Family Services

Kim Binaco-Sylvia
Liberty Bank

Jennifer Granger
Pfizer, Inc.

Patrick Green
Yale New Haven Health Lawrence + Memorial Hospital

PAIAI Noodle Bar + Grill
Samouri Noodle Bar + Grill

PRESIDENT
Tony Sheridan
Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT

Raymond Solutions

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Paul Bond
A Beautiful Company

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Robert J. Halloran, Jr.
Brown Jacobsen, P.C.

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Megan Gilbert
President and CEO

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Lyndsey O’Brien
Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Tony Sheridan
President and CEO

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

American Financial

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Thames Valley Council for Community Action

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

John Lombardi
Lombardi Gravel & Excavation, LLC

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Lori Woll
Mystic River Building Company

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Maryam Elahi
Boat

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Russell E. Kennedy
Mystic River Building Company

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Hartford Healthcare

NEW ROLES, NEW STAFF

Maryam Elahi
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Maryam Elahi
Boat
The Chamber staff focused early efforts on member outreach and essential information. Touching base with our members through hundreds of calls, emails and texts, we listened to what they needed. Through the generosity of the Pfizer Foundation and Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation, we supported struggling businesses and new members with supplemental grants for membership. The connection to the Chamber network and services offered peace of mind when businesses and organizations needed us most.

2020 NEW MEMBER

**SWEET HILL FARM AND RUSTIC BOUTIQUE CATERING AND EVENTS**

Clearly fans of collaboration in the marriage of their two businesses, Rustic Boutique is the exclusive caterer and plays a management role at Sweet Hill Farms’ country chic wedding venue in Gales Ferry. With events limited to intimate gatherings, Rustic Boutique’s grab-and-go meals became even more of a focus for the catering company. The eclectic mix of local products, grocery, and gift items from CT artists, farms, and small businesses represents the power of community the Chamber is excited to promote.

"FOCUSED ON OUR VISION OF SUPERB QUALITY AND ATTAINABLE PRICING, IT’S MUSIC TO OUR EARS WHEN CUSTOMERS SAY, ‘I CAN’T BELIEVE EVERYTHING IS SO REASONABLE.’ WORKING WITH THE CHAMBER HAS HELPED US SHARE THAT VISION WITH THE WHOLE REGION."

Charlene Rand, Rustic Boutique Catering & Events, Founder, Catering & Design
Rapidly shifting guidance and emerging relief funds from federal and state entities were hallmarks of the early days of the pandemic. The Chamber collected, sorted, and shared the most pertinent information with the business and nonprofit community, and we offered direct access to government officials through live webinars. Participants had the chance to ask decision makers important questions relevant to their concerns. Zoom became the word of the year—a strange name for a platform where no one is actually going anywhere. From remote desks at home, the region did travel virtually to meetings and webinars where they received essential information and creative approaches to adapt to the “new normal.”

**MEMBER TO MEMBER WEBINARS**

At its heart, the Chamber is about its members. Our job is to bring members together to grow community and the economy. Sharing their specialized knowledge, members provided insights on how to manage business through the pandemic. Maria Miranda of Miranda Creative recognized the need to pivot early on and offered our first coronavirus targeted webinar, “Messaging during a Market Disruption.” Bridget Brown of StoryMatters offered a workshop on “Improv for Better Communication” and Richard Hews of Pathways of Growth helped businesses create positive strategies for “Accountability in a Remote-Work Setting.” Other webinars throughout the year included federal funding relief led by loan officers at our community banks, trainings, and creative approaches to adapt to the new way of doing business.

**TOP ATTENDED WEBINARS**

1. CT Department of Labor Updates and FAQs
2. Open for Business - Preparing a Successful Reopening Strategy, Sessions 1, 2, and 3
3. Funding and Relief Programs with SBDC and Local Lenders
4. Pivot - Messaging during a Market Disruption
5. Navigating the Paycheck Protection Program

**ROUNDTABLES HELP MEMBERS SHARE AND STRATEGIZE**

Convening business owners by industry, the Chamber facilitated roundtable discussions for restaurants, real estate professionals, and event and hospitality venues. Food service faced some of the most difficult challenges as they navigated safety and service protocols as well as supply chain disruptions. Providing the chance to discuss reopening, safe operation, and industry needs moving forward was an important function for the Chamber.

**KEY SPEAKERS**

- Senator Richard Blumenthal
- Congressman Joe Courtney
- Governor Ned Lamont
- David Lehman, Commissioner, DECD
- Katie Dykes, Commissioner, DEEP
- Glendowlyn Thames, Deputy Commissioner, DECD
- Peter Denious, AdvanceCT

**TOWN HALLS**

The Chamber’s annual forums with local elected officials always provide important updates with town leaders, but in 2020 details about the COVID-19 response were more vital than ever. The Chamber hosted Town Hall Updates with City of Groton, Town of Groton, New London, East Lyme and Waterford, as well as a forum with State Senators from our region.

**DEBATES**

Partnering with The League of Women Voters of Southeastern Connecticut, the Chamber hosted debates for candidates running for State House seats in the 23rd, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, and 41st Districts. Taking the debates online via our Facebook page, we connected voters with the candidates when large, in-person events were not possible.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT**

Leadership Eastern Connecticut is a two-year program that prepares future community leaders for positions of responsibility by acquainting them with significant community processes and issues that affect businesses and the public. Over 600 business leaders have completed the course since its inception in 1987. The Class of 2020 completed their second year in the program and celebrated their graduation in one of the Chamber’s few in-person events. The Spa at Norwich Inn facilitated a safe, outdoor event where keynote speaker Ulysses Hammond stressed the value of flexibility, vision, and creativity as a leader in a crisis.

**2019-2020 Program Sponsors:** Atlantic Broadband, CorePlus Credit Union, CT Hospital Association, Three Rivers Community College
In February, the Chamber announced Michael Rauh, President/CEO of Chelsea Groton Bank, would be honored. Awarded annually for outstanding contributions on behalf of the civic and business community, the Citizen of the Year for 2020 would further demonstrate his mettle, leading the bank through the intense Paycheck Protection Program where they processed 4.5 years’ worth of small business loans in eight weeks. Chelsea Groton Bank and its Foundation gave a record $1 million to local nonprofits in 2020. Through it all Rauh focused on supporting bank staff and clients with safety and service as primary goals.

Celebrating 10 years at the helm of Chelsea Groton Bank, Rauh has dedicated himself to the local community throughout his tenure. He has led and served on many Boards, including the Chamber, Eugene O’Neill Theater Center, The Yale New Haven Health System, the Norwich Free Academy Foundation, and the Norwich Community Development Corporation. Serving in another crucial sector, Rauh was L+M Healthcare’s Board Chair through most of 2020.

The Chamber and the eastern CT community plan to honor Michael Rauh with a fitting celebration of his dedicated service in 2021.

Introducing a catchy new name this year, the Chamber unexpectedly celebrated the Eastern CT Regional Chamber Awards in a new way, too. Traditionally given at the Chamber’s Annual Meeting, the awards became the center of a digital and media campaign sponsored by Chelsea Groton Bank, Bouvier Insurance, Pat Munger Construction, LJ Shoreline Realty, Stifel, and Child and Family Agency of Southeastern CT. Videos on Facebook recognized each winner in a weeklong campaign, captured in print for an insert in The Day and a special edition of the Chamber’s Voice newsletter. The success of bringing these winners more directly into the public eye may lead to similar campaigns in the future.

Business of the Year: Pfizer
Small Business of the Year: Duncklee Cooling & Heating
Community Revitalization Leader: A.R. Building Company
Nonprofit of the Year: Public Library of New London
Best Place to Work: Chelsea Groton Bank
Industry Innovator: Mohegan Sun
Tourism Leader of the Year: Bill Furgueson, Downtown Mystic Merchants Association
Young Professional of the Year: Matthew Spring, Stifel
Volunteer of the Year: Gail Weber, Minuteman Press

Each year, the Chamber holds a breakfast honoring nonprofit organizations’ essential contributions to the community. In 2020, these groups met unprecedented need when even basic ways of operating were entirely upended. In December, the Chamber invited social service providers to take a breath—quite literally—gathering virtually with Cindy Loughran, CPC, speaking on using mindfulness to manage stress and build resilience. The Chamber wishes to express our deep appreciation for the work done by frontline heroes.

The Young Professionals of Eastern CT continued their social and professional networking while observing social distancing. Outdoor events included hikes, dinner on the patio of Buon Appetito, and tailgating with dinner from Pink Basil. Community service went virtual with YPs sharing photos of their own Earth Day cleanup. Program sponsors Charter Oak Federal Credit Union and Keith Turner - Homestead Funding continued their support as the program repositioned its offerings in 2020.

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.”

Helen Keller
Traveling the trail—discovering eastern CT’s downtowns and businesses—was the concept that launched the Chamber’s annual shop local promotion three years ago. In 2020, customers felt more inclined to shop from home, and the Holiday Shopping Trail responded by moving online. Getting local businesses in front of stay-at-home shoppers helped sales in a tough season.

The website that replaced printed passports provided advantages that make the platform a great choice going forward. Going digital increased measurable participation 300% with active users engaging multiple times, resulting in over 800 entries. The entry structure incentivized purchases, social media connections, in-person shopping, and following links to online stores and videos. The far-reaching campaign achieved over 20,000 impressions on social media. Collected data includes an email list, perfect for future shop local promotions and a benefit for participating stores.

The 2020 Holiday Shopping Trail received generous support from presenting sponsors Comcast and The Day, and supporting sponsors Community Health Centers, Inc., and Hall Communications.

Every tradition was reinvented in 2020 including the Chamber’s customary grand opening ceremonies. Social distancing and gathering size restrictions led to sharing the celebrations online through Facebook Live. With views in the thousands and the chance to engage a wider audience, going live is here to stay.

TOP 10 BLOGS

1. Grants and Loans for Small Businesses and Nonprofits
2. The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT Celebrates 110th Anniversary and Annual Meeting with Regional Awards
3. Restaurants for Take Out, Curbside, or Delivery
4. Put Your Business on the Map (Let’s Go 860)
5. Governor Lamont Releases Rules for Businesses Under First Phase of Connecticut’s Reopening Plans Amid COVID-19
6. Resources for Small Business Employers and Workers
7. Dining Al Fresco, Eating Out Today
9. Time’s Up Act Brings New Requirements for Training on Sexual Harassment Prevention
10. Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT Announces Michael Rauh as Citizen of the Year

HOLIDAY SHOPPING TRAIL’S SUCCESSFUL PIVOT

RESTAURANT RESILIENCE

Overnight, the restaurant industry shifted into a new, uncharted business model. As venues developed creative ways to deliver for customers, the Chamber promoted industry innovators.

Chapter One in Mystic passed iconic cocktails and delicious dinners through their Open Window service. Filomena’s touchless menu stood four feet tall and was wheeled through a parking lot transformed into an outdoor dining and live music hotspot.

Flanders Fish Market became an essentials market as well, providing hard-to-get items like milk and eggs in the early days of the pandemic. Outdoor heaters extended their season on the deck for safe family gatherings at Thanksgiving.

Gourmet Galley kept catering staff busy in between intimate weddings by preparing dinners to go, and the business opened a flagship store, GG AT HOME, in November.

MARKETING

REINVENT

Keeping connected—with information, opportunity, and each other—relied more heavily than ever on digital platforms. The Chamber built a COVID-19 resource webpage with reliable information and links to key governmental agencies. New legislation, funding opportunities, and reopening guidelines continue to be shared in timely emails, social media posts, and blogs.

As businesses reopened in May, the Chamber created a new page of resources linking to needed products and services provided by our members. The list included construction companies, rentals, cleaning services, and PPE suppliers. Chamber President and CEO Tony Sheridan served on the State’s Reopen Connecticut Small Business Implementation Task Force in a statewide effort to list essential reopening resources.

In sectors hit particularly hard—hospitality, tourism, arts, and culture—blogs, social media, and member news promoted shopping local, dining in or taking out, and purchasing gift certificates or memberships to keep businesses and venues afloat while operating at limited capacity. The Chamber reached out to members in specific sectors to highlight services adapted to the new environment, such as restaurants, fitness centers, tech providers, retail stores, educational opportunities, virtual arts events, and outdoor entertainment.

Every tradition was reinvented in 2020 including the Chamber’s customary grand opening ceremonies. Social distancing and gathering size restrictions led to sharing the celebrations online through Facebook Live. With views in the thousands and the chance to engage a wider audience, going live is here to stay.

RIBBON CUTTINGS GO “LIVE”

Tony Sheridan celebrates Better Together CT ribbon cutting with Dr. Stefana Pecher.

A Title IX by Bank Square Books’ grand opening was streamed live on the Chamber’s Facebook page with 1.1K views.

The 2020 Holiday Shopping Trail received generous support from presenting sponsors Comcast and The Day, and supporting sponsors Community Health Centers, Inc., and Hall Communications.
This initiative, funded through Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation, identifies minority-owned businesses that can benefit from Chamber membership.

- Assured Quality Homecare, LLC
- Exemplify to Edify, LLC
- Golden Egg Concepts
- Long River Farm
- Main Avent Sports & Apparel
- Operation Fresh Start
- Rise Nutrition
- Rustic Boutique Catering and Events
- Sweet Hill Farm
- The Tin Peddler
- Work Vessels for Veterans

Pfizer has long been an essential Chamber partner and generous corporate citizen. As pandemic restrictions continued to curtail many business operations, the Pfizer Foundation provided a donation to help us support the small business and nonprofit community, as well as bolster our operations in the face of a difficult economic environment.

- Defrayed the cost to allow the Chamber to distribute 6,000 complimentary masks and hand sanitizer during PPE shortage
- Provided financial support for membership dues and other services for many member businesses facing Covid-driven financial difficulties
- Supported free registration for hundreds of attendees for Chamber webinars on PPP/EIDL, CARES Act, FMLA, reopening, marketing, and other timely topics
- Supported technology and software to provide new or revamped services in a suddenly “socially-distanced” world

In 2020, access to affordable, comprehensive healthcare became top-of-mind across the region and country. The Chamber, in partnership with Morin Associates LLC and Lifestyle Health Plans, was proud to grow participation in its strategic group health insurance solution by 33%. Employers can manage healthcare costs while providing valuable benefits to employees through this program, the only one of its kind in New London county.

$438,005
SAVED BY MEMBERS
AS OF DECEMBER 2020

157
EMPLOYEES ENROLLED

The Metro Chamber group ramped up their meeting schedule to respond to the pandemic, meeting weekly in the early months and now bi-weekly as they continue to support recovery efforts. In 2020 Chamber President and CEO Tony Sheridan continued his service as chairman of the CT Airport Authority. Bradley International Airport faced serious challenges this year beginning with adopting safety protocols and continuing with a severe decline in travel of 72% year over year. The airport facilitated COVID-19 testing for passengers and CT residents on-site and in a drive-through center.

### Chamber President and CEO Tony Sheridan continued his service as chairman of the CT Airport Authority. Bradley International Airport faced serious challenges this year beginning with adopting safety protocols and continuing with a severe decline in travel of 72% year over year. The airport facilitated COVID-19 testing for passengers and CT residents on-site and in a drive-through center.

**Office Manager, Lori Thompson handed out complimentary PPE to businesses in need, like Duncklee Cooling and Heating, outside the Chamber’s office.**

**Office Manager, Lori Thompson handed out complimentary PPE to businesses in need, like Duncklee Cooling and Heating, outside the Chamber’s office.**

### Town Board of Directors

- John C. Burrows
- Jennifer Dyer
- Dwayne "Doc" Goosby
- John J. Herlihy
- Ellie F. Paige
- Terence J. Sanborn
- Lawrence "Larry" Swords

**Metro Chamber Members:**

- Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut
- Waterbury Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce
- MetroHartford Alliance/Hartford Chamber of Commerce
- Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce
- Bridgeport Regional Business Council
- Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce

Office Manager, Lori Thompson handed out complimentary PPE to businesses in need, like Duncklee Cooling and Heating, outside the Chamber’s office.
SCORE provides free consultations to small businesses or those interested in starting a business. The Chamber provides meeting space for SCORE’s weekly office hours and promotes their workshops. After March 2020, meetings were held virtually.

SECWAC aims to foster an understanding of issues of foreign policy and international affairs. The Chamber provides administrative support and promotion for SECWAC.

The Chamber and the Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Eastern CT co-present Eastern CT’s Premier Home Show, connecting residents with local contractors. The Chamber also provides administrative support and office space.

The Chamber and EWIB have a collaborative partnership with the shared goal of growing eastern CT’s economy through workforce-related programs. Through the partnership, a Chamber staff member works out of the American Job Centers’ Montville office.

The Chamber partners with CT SBDC in eastern CT to offer professional, confidential, and expert business advice for business owners to overcome challenges and reach their goals. SBDC has free resources, tools, and online trainings to offer business help along the way.

Through its partnership with Thames River Innovation Place, funded by CTNext, the Chamber has created and administered new programs such as Community Concierge (a regional welcome program for new employees), CHAT Eastern Region (an online tourism training program for eastern CT that compliments the CT Hospitality Awareness Program established by the CT Tourism Coalition); and an innovation center in downtown New London is in the planning stages.

The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT is proud to partner with the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce on regional tourism marketing efforts and events and programs that benefit our shared membership.

The partnership between the Chamber and the Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition increases collaborative efforts to better serve the organizations in our region.

The Southeastern CT Enterprise Region (seCTer) is the designated private, non-profit economic development organization providing a broad range of services and resources to stimulate and support economic development and diversification within the region.

The Chamber engages in economic development initiatives with partners around the region and statewide.
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF EASTERN CT FOUNDATION

GIVE

EVERY MONTH IS A HOLIDAY

Due to the pandemic, one of the Foundation’s most precious year-end traditions, the Holiday Gala, could not occur. However, the heart and the spirit of the Gala continue; despite the lack of our typical lively event, dedicated sponsors and donors are still stepping up to ensure that at-risk children and families are supported when it matters most. Miranda Creative and Eighty Six Media helped to conceptualize and launch this unique campaign.

$117,380
Donated and distributed to deserving individuals and organizations in Eastern CT

$7,500
DISTRIBUTED

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Recipients are determined based on need, academic standing, community service, and their desire to work and live in eastern CT.

Angie Correa
Science and Technology Magnet High School of Southeastern Connecticut ‘20
University of Saint Joseph

Cassandra Cannon
Science and Technology Magnet High School of Southeastern Connecticut ‘20
Salve Regina University

Hope Sowle
Stonington High School ‘20
Carnegie Mellon University

Kali Whitford
Norwich Free Academy ‘20
Virginia Tech

Monn Pierre
Norwich Free Academy ‘20
Three Rivers Community College

Sara Beth Bouchard
Science and Technology Magnet High School of Southeastern Connecticut ‘20
Wesleyan University

$94,380
DISTRIBUTED

2020 FOUNDATION GRANT RECIPIENTS

Tommy Toy Fund
$17,500

Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board
$5,000

St. Vincent de Paul Place, Norwich, Inc.
$5,000

United Way of Southeastern Connecticut
$5,000

Always Home, Inc.
$3,500

Madonna Place, Inc.
$3,500

Safe Futures, Inc.
$3,000

Sea Research Foundation
$3,000

Shules Development Corporation
$3,000

High Hopes Therapeutic Riding, Inc.
$2,500

Higher Edge, Inc.
$2,500

New England Science & Sailing
$2,500

Riverfront Children’s Center
$2,500

United Cerebral Palsy of Eastern Connecticut
$2,500

Waterford Country School
$2,235

United Community and Family Services, Inc.
$2,235

Thames River Community Service
$2,200

City of Norwich
$2,000

New London Homeless Hospitality Center
$2,000

Pregnancy Support Center, Inc.
$2,000

Thames Valley Council for Community Action, Inc.
$2,000

The Lighthouse Voc-Ed Center
$2,000

FRESH New London
$1,700

Catholic Charities Diocese of Norwich, Inc.
$1,500

Norwich Community Backpack Program
$1,500

Stonington Historical Society
$1,200

Eastern CT Community Gardens Association
$1,045

Channel 3 Kids Camp
$1,000

Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra
$1,000

Hygienic Art Inc.
$1,000

Immigration Advocacy & Support Center
$1,000

Norwich Historical Society
$1,000

Norwich Rotary Foundation
$1,000

S.T.E.P.S., Inc
$1,000

The Arc Eastern Connecticut
$1,000

Children’s Museum of SECT
$900

Montville Little League
$500

ADDITIONAL DONATIONS

$15,500
DONATED

Responding to the community in 2020 meant addressing needs that arose quickly from unemployment, school closings, and reduced access to services. The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut Foundation working with generous business executives, directed an additional $15,500 to local food centers in April.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL PLACE

Increased demand for meals and basic needs due to the coronavirus put pressure on local food pantry and soup kitchen St. Vincent de Paul Place. Creatively delivering meals and services under pandemic protocols, St. Vincent de Paul Place continued to serve the community with the help of the community, supported by the Chamber Foundation, Gemma E. Moran United Way/Labor Food Center, local grocery stores, farms, organizations, and individuals. Dime Bank extended their support of St. Vincent de Paul Place this year to include Chamber membership.

JILLIAN CORBIN

THIS CHARITABLE DONATION WILL ALLOW US TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE NUTRITIOUS FOOD AND OTHER CRITICAL SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN NEED IN OUR COMMUNITY.
The first two months of 2020 started strong, but with the news of COVID-19 restrictions in March, we faced an economic downturn, canceled events with lost sponsorships, and dropped memberships. Preparing for the worst, the Chamber made the extremely difficult decision to furlough half of its staff in hopes of ensuring fiscal sustainability. We experienced significant losses in membership and event revenues, but our conservative approach was bolstered by the continued support of our Regional Benefactors, state support, and a generous gift from The Pfizer Foundation. Staff were returned from furlough as soon as possible, and although uncertainty continued as we neared the end of 2020, the Chamber was able to achieve a healthy financial position. We remain dedicated to supporting the community in its post-COVID recovery.

Our community, our country, and our world grieve together as we remember those we have lost in 2020.
A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR REGIONAL BENEFactors WHO CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO PROGRAMS IN SUPPORT OF THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Mohegan Sun
EVERSOURCE
FOXWOODS RESORT CASINO

Ørsted
Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative
Pfizer
Dominion Energy

ConnectiCare
Charter Oak Credit Union
Liberty Bank
People's United Bank

Gateway Terminal
Cross Sound Ferry
equinor
Dime Bank

Chelsea Groton
Antonino Auto Group
Suisman Shapiro Attorneys-At-Law
Groton Utilities At Your Service

The Day
Mystic Aquarium
Putnam Bank
The Simon Kenner Company
Atlantic Broadband

General Dynamics Electric Boat
Genesys Diagnostics Inc
Comcast Business

The Bulletin
Quinn & Hary

Yale NewHaven Health
Lawrence + Memorial Hospital
VINEYARD WIND
Hartford Healthcare Backus Hospital